



Beeston **Methodist** Church

Newsletter



*A Justice-seeking
Church*

October 2023

A Justice-seeking Church

The Methodist Church is a justice-seeking church. The Methodist Conference in June overwhelmingly voted to accept a report, two years in the making, which looks at why and how Methodists act for justice. The report proposes a framework to support the Methodist Church's action for justice over the next five years. This month's newsletter covers the acceptance of the report by Conference, as well as a summary of the report itself – see page 12 onward. There is much more information about this on the Methodist Church website.

I have been informed that some people in our congregation with macular degeneration can find it hard to read words which are split over two lines, i.e. hyphenated. Hence, to be more inclusive, I have changed the newsletter by removing hyphenation in this and subsequent issues.

Mark Ramsey – Editor

Beeston Methodist Church Newsletter – October 2023

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Any articles for inclusion in the November issue should be emailed by 16th Oct to newsletter@beestonmethodist.church. Articles may be edited for space.

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Cover photo from www.methodist.org.uk/our-work/our-work-in-britain/social-justice/walking-with-micah

Minister's message

Whilst on holiday I went to a garden. It was beautifully laid out with neatly manicured lawns and nicely kept trees. The paths were clear and easy to find. It was also a lovely sunny day which made walking amongst the garden a very pleasant experience. I am not a gardener and struggle to identify any type of plant. The people who had set out the gardens had thought of this as well. Near to a number of the plants were small tags which clearly identified the nearby plant using both the Latin and English names. Not everything was labelled though and as I walked along, I heard questions being asked as to what a particular plant was and a response of "Use the app" and "Google it" could be heard.

As we go through life, we sometimes work hard to identify and label things.

Sometimes we apply labels to ourselves and at other times, these labels are applied to us by others. Being identified as the new minister for example can be a benefit and a challenge. I might be new to BMC but I have been a minister for 14 years. The minister is also a label that means many different things to each person and can carry assumptions about expectations as to what being a minister means to you. Ministers may carry the same title but we are all very different people.

Even when we look at something like where we were born, grew up or the type of jobs that have been done can be labels that are applied and assumptions may be made about someone. They may not be correct but they have a habit of sticking.

Jesus asked his disciples who people said he was. There were a great many different responses. Then Jesus asked who they say He is. The response given by Simon was based on his experience of what he had seen and heard Jesus do and say. Jesus then told them to keep that to themselves.

Maybe we need to sometimes do the same and not be too quick to label or try and identify but to get to know someone first.

Andrew

Update from the Leadership Team

The Leadership Team has been delighted to welcome our new Minister, **Rev Andrew Checkley**, into our conversations, and he is already feeding in new ideas and ways of looking at things which will doubtless enrich our church life together.

We have been working on ideas to review and update our **Church Mission Plan** and will be supporting the Finance Team with developing a Business Plan to support grant applications towards our redevelopment work.

This month some of the Leadership Team and others from the congregation, completed the **Methodist Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training** together – there was a lot to get through, but the material was excellent and very thought-provoking, highlighting how the Equality Act 2010 applies to our church life and helping us to think through various possible scenarios in this light. Anyone who would like to complete this training can speak to one of the Leadership Team or access it online from www.methodist.org.uk/about-us/the-methodist-church/the-inclusive-methodist-church/training-for-justice-dignity-and-solidarity/mandatory-edi-training-equality-diversity-and-inclusion

Harvest has come and gone and we thank God for the good gifts we receive. As we said last winter, as the colder weather draws in we are aware that there are some people who will struggle to make ends meet, making decisions about whether to put heating on or have a hot meal? As a church family we would like to support each other through difficult times. If any one of you or someone you know is struggling, then please do not suffer in silence. There is plenty of help out there. Please do speak about it with someone you know and trust. If you would like to have a quiet word with one of the church stewards at any time, then we are happy to listen and to help you find out where to get further support and advice.

With every blessing and care.

Sally Ramsey, on behalf of the Leadership Team

Update from the Caring & Nurture Group

The Caring & Nurture Group has been busy recently. We are planning a **meal to welcome students** who are new to the area, to take place after the morning service on Sunday 15th October, and we would welcome as many as possible from the congregation to stay for lunch, help us to welcome any newcomers and tell them about the life of our church.

Two **new church housegroups** have now begun meeting, one on a Monday afternoon and the other on Wed/Thurs evenings. If anyone is interested in attending any of the church housegroups, look out for further information in the church notices.

We have had useful discussions about how to be ready and welcoming towards anyone who comes to church in a wheelchair on a Sunday and, as a result, have put in place some new measures – such as specific seating in the front transept and a reserved half a pew at the back of church, and provision of large print Bibles and hymnbooks in those spaces. We have recruited two **Differing Abilities Champions** so far, who will soon begin meeting in order to think about how to improve our welcome to those with health or learning difficulties, and our ability to include all in the life of the church.

We are now meeting in person and are enjoying one another's fellowship. Our next meeting will be on 6th November.

Sally Ramsey, on behalf of the Caring & Nurture Group

Annual Christmas Card and Gift Sale

The **Annual Christmas Card and Gift Sale** will take place on Saturday 28th October at 10am-12 noon. Various charities will be once again taking part.

Baking of cakes for the cake stall will be gratefully appreciated, as would help with the serving of teas and coffee. My contact details are Diane Wilson – 07359078439

Diane Wilson

Sitting Down – *Rev Christine Fox*

This August my time in Wollaton comes to an end, and also my time as an ‘active’ minister. Reflecting on my almost-ten-years of ministry – all in the same place, from probationer minister to Superintendent – it’s with very mixed feelings that I come to my ‘sitting down’ as Methodists call retirement!

When God first called me to be a minister it was in a vision of me in a pulpit. I wasn’t even a church steward let alone a preacher then and I buried the thought as impossible. Later others spoke God’s call to me until I began to believe it might be possible. The government kindly equalised women’s and men’s retiring age, and possibility turned to reality as I was accepted for training for ministry.

In Durham, Theology, Spirituality, and Pioneer modules, and placements in farming villages seem quite remote now from Nottingham, but the presence of God in God’s people there shone through in their acceptance of me, despite my southern accent! It’s people’s acceptance that has continually reminded me of those words at ordination ‘you are worthy’.

I cannot thank God enough for the joy and privilege of getting to know, and work with several hundred people of all ages that are the Methodist church in the Nottingham Trent Valley circuit, and wider the people of God in this community. The most joyful times have been when I’ve seen them working together – from the hours of hard graft and prayer to transform a dark foyer into a bright open space that now offers church and community a place to connect – to when I see a whole group of folk contributing to an act of worship that transcends the sum of the parts because God is there, blessing and multiplying what they offer. Initiatives for new worshipping communities have renewed my hope in the future of the church.

The hardest times have resulted from when people have taken out their personal pain on someone else. But God has been there too in providing the strength for hours of listening, and giving me the words for agonised prayer.

I have learned a huge amount from the people I have ministered among – from a Ghanaian congregation I learnt about a faith that trusts God absolutely; I

benefited from the wisdom of some of the more mature in years; ecumenical *and* interfaith links have brought me joy in seeing our shared faith in the One God. Working with students and young adults has given me insights into new ways of being church.

I have been glad to play a part in several churches' signing up as Inclusive churches and registering them to marry any two people. I believe the future of the Methodist church lies in the increasing recognition it is gaining for its desire to be inclusive, and also through continuing to developing the online worshipping communities sparked by the desire to keep meeting together despite Covid19.

There has of course been so much diversity of *work* that many times I have felt almost overwhelmed – with more that *could* be done than I ever thought possible... and recently, after my unexpected tripling of work-load this last year, I wrote these words:

What I have gained in experience I have lost in imagination

What I have gained in number of churches I have lost in time for the individual;

But what I have lost in time I have gained in **ability to trust God for the words and the vision** – God's imagination.

It has been hard work, but even with this last full-on year, I wouldn't have wanted to be doing anything else. I've been so grateful for a manse sited with a view of the oak trees, and sometimes the deer, of Wollaton Park. I have not had to start over again in a new place, and yet the changing group of churches under my pastoral oversight has given me new life at points along the way.

I am a bit afraid of the sudden change that will come with sitting down; I'm quite expecting to sleep for a week as the adrenaline levels drop! But I do have hopes for the next phase of my life. Before being called to ministry I was called to be a wife, a mother and Grandma – my family's support in the busy times and in the joys and sorrows of ministry have been invaluable to me. At one point in the process of Candidating when it was uncertain if I would be accepted for training I said, "Oh well I can always be Grandma." Though my grandchildren are now

between 8 and 16, I hope its not too late to become 'Grandma with time' for them. And of course time to do things together with my husband Keith.

Before I began preaching I was a self-employed nutrition consultant and I'm still passionate about nutrition tailored to the individual – so I hope that somehow God has a plan for me as I sit down that brings together faith and nutrition – not only more time to cook and eat with family and friends, but maybe also in nutrition plans for better health to make other people too, fitter for doing the work God has called them to.

And so I want to thank you, and pray 'God bless you all' as you journey on – as we all keep growing wherever we are planted!

Rev Christine Fox. This article first appeared in Wollaton Churches Link magazine and is reprinted with permission.

Prayer for Morocco

A prayer for those affected by the earthquake in Morocco.

God, our refuge in times of trouble.

You told us to pray always and not to lose heart.

We pray for our neighbours in Morocco.

We pray for you to comfort those affected by the earthquake.

For those who have lost loved ones, homes and all they know.

Bring solace in their grief, healing in their pain and help in their time of need.

Let those in need know they are not alone;

May your light shine through the darkness.

And bring hope and strength.

We pray for provision for communities who now face an uncertain future.

Open our hearts, may they be full of compassion.

Draw close to those who need you today.

In the name of Jesus,

Amen

Taken from www.christianaid.org.uk/resources/appeals/prayer-morocco

Statement in response to the Prime Minister's announcement on net zero policies



A joint statement by

The Baptist Union of Great Britain

The Methodist Church

The United Reformed Church

We are dismayed that the Prime Minister is delaying the implementation of policies to achieve net zero. As Christian leaders we are deeply committed to encouraging all within our sphere of influence to be ambitious in reaching net zero as we seek to care for God's creation. This transition must be rapid, equitable and just.

At a time when so many people are struggling financially, the government has a crucial role to play in ensuring the cost of transition to net zero does not fall most heavily on those least able to afford it. Delaying measures to insulate homes will have the opposite effect, and slowing efforts to reduce fossil fuel use will increase climate impacts on vulnerable communities around the globe.

Extreme weather events this year have demonstrated the urgency of the situation. The independent Climate Change Committee have assessed that even current policy measures are insufficient to meet the UK's climate targets. The government needs to urgently demonstrate how it will get the UK back on track to reach net zero before 2050.

The commitments made at COP26 were instrumental in providing confidence to industry, investors and civil society that the UK was serious about rising to the climate challenge. It is a source of extreme disappointment that the Prime Minister's announcement will damage that confidence and undermine our collective efforts. As a country, we have moral and legal responsibilities to show leadership in tackling the climate emergency together.

22 September 2023. Taken from www.methodist.org.uk/about-us/news/latest-news/all-news/statement-in-response-to-the-prime-minister-s-announcement-on-net-zero-policies

Bible reading: Mercy



Something to read

“Who is a God like you, pardoning iniquity and passing over the transgression of the remnant of his possession? He does not retain his anger forever because he delights in showing steadfast love. He will again have compassion upon us; he will tread our iniquities under foot. You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea. ”

Micah 7:18-19

Something to think about

No one likes to dwell on their mistakes. We want to move on, put the past behind us. But experience tells us that the big mistakes – the times we have hurt others – aren’t so easy to move on from.

What an extraordinary message of hope there is in this passage from Micah. Forgiveness and mercy are serious matters. We can’t simply move on without an effort to turn first to God in God’s ‘steadfast love’. This love goes further than we can imagine; it lasts into eternity. God wants a loving relationship with each and all of us. If we turn to God, then we can turn back to others around us and – encouraged by God’s love and mercy – we can begin the work of healing and reparation.

Through our Saviour and Creator’s love and mercy, our wrongdoing will be cast into the sea and new possibilities will open up for us to better serve God and one another.

Something to do

Reflect on something you have got wrong. This could be a personal mistake or it could be a system that you have been part of that you now understand has done harm. Ask God to forgive you.

Next time you are near a lake, pond, river or the sea, drop a small pebble or stone into it and take a moment to ask for God’s mercy that your wrongdoing may be ‘cast into the depths’.

Explore the resources that Christian Aid offered for Racial Justice Sunday and think about what repentance and reparations mean in the context of racial justice. www.christianaid.org.uk/news/get-involved/racial-justice-sunday-2023

Something to pray

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing,
that you may flourish in faith, hope and love,
through the power of the Holy Spirit.

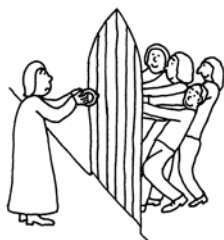
May the peace of God, which passes all understanding,
shelter your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Amen

Contribution by Dr Frances Clemson, Faith Communications and Just Scripture Specialist, Christian Aid. From www.christianaid.org.uk/pray/daily-bible-readings

SUPPLY CLERGY

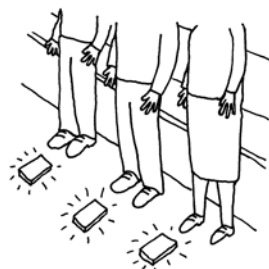
WHEN CONGREGATIONS MISBEHAVE



HOLDING THE DOOR SHUT



"WE HAD THESE READINGS
LAST WEEK"



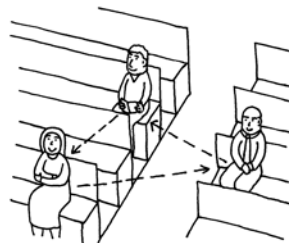
ALL DROPPING HYMN BOOKS
AT THE SAME TIME



"WE DON'T HAVE A VESTRY"



MUMBLING THE HYMNS



SITTING IN THE WRONG PEWS

This CartoonChurch.com cartoon by Dave Walker originally appeared in the Church Times

CartoonChurch.com

A Justice-seeking Church



The Methodist Conference has overwhelmingly voted to recommit the Methodist Church to being a **Justice-seeking Church**.

The report received by the Conference hopes to encourage more Methodists in acting for justice, along with their local communities, and to focus efforts on contributing to change in key areas including poverty, refugees, the environment, discrimination and peace.

The report is the result of a two year process of conversation and listening. This involved looking at how Methodists have worked for justice throughout their history and what is being done now, as well as hearing people's experiences of injustice. The report involved churches, young people, communities and schools – sharing their visions of what a just world looks like.

The report explains why Methodists do justice and how that is born out of a belief in God. The report identifies the shared principles which underpin beliefs about what God's justice is, and what that means in terms of seeking justice. These principles will help the Church decide together how to respond to new challenges.

- Everyone is created in God's image, that has consequences for decisions we make about how people are treated
- God desires the flourishing of all creation, that will shape our decisions about human impact upon the environment
- In the world as it is at the moment the poorest always lose out, we believe God has particular regard for them and for those who are marginalised in society and so should we
- Christians won't always agree about the means, but we hope that these principles will help us to be clearer on what is important

With so many pressing issues of concern in the world, the report identified five key priorities for Methodists to focus their activities around – poverty, refugees, climate, discrimination and peace.

The report acknowledged that Methodists and others are already active in working for justice in these areas by helping to meet needs, campaigning for change and working alongside communities.

The report's author, Rachel Lampard, commented, "Having these priority areas will help us to focus our efforts together to achieve change by sharing expertise, communicating, and working with others to make a difference.

"Acting justly is already at the heart of what it is to be a Methodist who tries to follow Jesus, as we see through the actions of so many churches in their communities.

"I hope that this report will make a difference by having an impact on the people who increasingly see they are called to lives of justice rooted in God. Our churches are already acting together to tackle poverty and climate change, to support refugees, to end discrimination and for peace and reconciliation – this report will encourage and strengthen that action. I hope that, together with all our communities, we will see the impact as we work together for a world that is more just and where everyone experiences life in all its fullness."

27 June 2023. Taken from www.methodist.org.uk/about-us/news/latest-news/all-news/a-justice-seeking-church

A summary of the report is overleaf.

Be thankful every morning when you wake to life anew.

No matter how you feel or what may lie ahead of you.

Don't expect the worst to happen.

Be an optimist

Be grateful and happy.

Give your thoughts an upward twist.

Patricia Strong. Supplied by Sandra and Robin Elliot.

A justice-seeking Methodist Church – the report in three minutes



God, whose nature is just, yearns for justice in the world.

As Christians we are called actively to do justice, show loving kindness and walk humbly with God. This invitation is at the heart of A Methodist Way of Life.

Methodists, now and in the past, have challenged injustice, worked for change and supported people experiencing injustices. As the Church in Britain faces new challenges – economic, ecological, political, social and those of declining membership – the time is right for a renewed focus on justice and a fresh approach for our Church.

The justice-seeking Church report proposes a framework to support the Methodist Church’s action for justice over the next five years.

Principles of justice

Six **Principles for justice** underpin our understanding of God’s justice and what it means to seek justice:

- **God made humans in the image of God, each worthy of equal value and dignity.** The search for justice entails treating others with respect, and may involve reclaiming lost worth.
- **God desires the flourishing of creation and human community within it.** The search for justice does not diminish or limit the flourishing of others but seeks to enable it.
- **God consistently shows a bias to people experiencing poverty and those who are excluded.** The search for justice must prioritise people who live in poverty or people who are marginalised in other ways.
- **God entrusts those in power with a special responsibility for upholding justice.** Those seeking justice will encourage and challenge those with power to fulfil their vocation.
- **God calls all people and nations actively to work for peace and justice, liberation and transformation.** It is never just someone else’s responsibility. We all have a part to play.

- **God calls us to live in hope and in ways that reflect God's character and the pattern of God's kingdom.** So, seeking justice involves honesty and truth, and may demand protest and resistance, restitution, forgiveness, reconciliation and ultimately transformation.

These Principles help us talk about our understanding of God's justice and are a tool to help us in our discussing, discernment and action.

Priorities for justice

These five key **Priorities for justice**, which were agreed after a time of listening and reflection, focus our efforts and our resources to support local churches in their worship and action.

1. **Tackling inequality and poverty:** seeking life in all its fullness
2. **Enabling a flourishing environment:** right relationship between people, planet and God
3. **Seeking justice for refugees:** one people, one world
4. **Opposing discrimination:** all are made in the image of God
5. **Pursuing peace:** seeking justice and reconciliation

Methodists have the opportunity to make a difference.

Through campaigning, being with those experiencing injustice and offering support, building relationships, or striving to tell a different story of a just world, churches will be able to engage with Priorities that are most relevant in their context – through existing involvement or through actions that reflects their gifts.

Practices for justice

The **Practices for justice** challenge people to consider both our ways of doing justice and our ways of being just, and how they can be consistent with each other.

- Our **ways of doing justice** involve bringing about change in the systems that hold problems in place. Beyond short term practical help, this can include action to change structures, to build relationships, and to transform understanding.

- Our **ways of being just** enable us to be ‘at our best’ when seeking justice. They enable sustainable, transformative and rooted action for justice to develop in churches and communities, and keep our actions grounded in and guided by our faith.



Using these Practices helps us to examine our current and planned justice activities, making sure that they contribute to change and are consistent with our beliefs about God’s justice.

A two-year process is proposed to embed this new framework for justice in the Methodist Church, and enable local churches to engage with and act on the Principles, Priorities and Practices for justice.

Taken from www.methodist.org.uk/our-work/our-work-in-britain/social-justice/a-justice-seeking-church/read-the-justice-seeking-church-report/a-justice-seeking-methodist-church-the-report-in-three-minutes

Prayer for Peace Sunday

Author of faith

Write peace

On every page of my life.

Let every word

Be for love

For non-violence

For understanding.

May your example

Of gentle strength

Transform the story

Of this troubled yet beautiful world.

Amen

Prayer from the Methodist Peace Fellowship.

This year, Peace Sunday was Sunday 24th September.



Embrace the Middle East

Prayer Diary



1 October As many churches celebrate their harvest festivals this week, we pray for our partner's sustainable agriculture project in Lebanon. Middle East Revive and Thrive (MERATH) is working with a local church in northern Lebanon to establish an organic community farming model that is environmentally friendly and provides a range of fresh produce for food-insecure families.

8 October Where water is unsafe to drink, people rely on plastic bottles – but this contributes to climate change and creates a waste problem. We are working with the Ankawa Humanitarian Committee in Erbil, Iraq, to introduce water filtration systems in schools, reducing the impact of single-use plastics and engaging children in caring for the environment.

15 October It is the time of the Palestinian olive harvest, and our volunteers are on their way to the West Bank to support the farmers. Olive trees, which are symbols of steadfastness and rootedness in the land, are a frequent target for destruction by Israeli settlers. By helping with the harvest, our volunteers show the farmers they are not forgotten.

22 October In many Egyptian communities, autistic children are misunderstood and hidden away. Our partner, BLESS, not only provides therapeutic services, but also runs summer camps, sibling sessions and parent training workshops to help families include and understand their autistic loved ones.

29 October The Pontifical Mission to Lebanon is working with women in Dbayeh refugee camp to improve awareness of environmental issues. Participants learn to make items from recyclable materials, which enables them to reduce waste and create useful products. The project also promotes health awareness and psychological well-being.

From [https://embraceme.org/s/Embrace Prayer Diary Aug23-Jan24 Web.pdf](https://embraceme.org/s/Embrace_Prayer_Diary_Aug23-Jan24_Web.pdf)

On Eagles' Wings in Germany – a Minister's Memoir

The Rev Colin Barrett, former Minister of Beeston Methodist Church, has written a book about a fascinating journey of discovery he and his wife Muriel experienced after moving to Germany as mission partners to two small congregations in Saxony.

It all began one sunny day in 2005 as Colin stood in what he describes as a chaotically beautiful Catholic church in Bavaria, wondering if any congregations of his own denomination, the Methodists, were to be found in Germany. His appointment as minister in charge of three churches in Codsall – a leafy suburb of Staffordshire – had come to an end. Moving to Germany was, in some ways, the bold fulfilment of Colin's childhood dream of living in a country that had always fascinated him.

Muriel and Colin were posted to Saxony in former East Germany, where they rubbed shoulders with people, who, until 1989, were citizens of a Communist country where freedom was limited. Somewhat disparagingly called Ossis by their West Germany neighbours, they had a reputation for being dour and ungrateful for the vast amount of money and resources the West had poured into their part of the country, following re-unification in 1990. But as Colin and Muriel became embedded in their daily lives, listened to endless stories of the "DDR times" and researched their history, they discovered a people who were not only determined, resourceful and industrious but also endlessly hospitable and generous with a lively sense of fun.

Colin's book, *On Eagles' Wings – A Pastor's Memoir*, is full of amusing anecdotes. The Barretts learned to speak the local dialect and grew to love the area known as the Erzgebirge, with its beautiful landscapes and entrancing traditions, where it's always Christmas. The members and friends of their congregations in Freiberg and Brand-Erbisdorf will forever be close to their hearts.

They were inspired by the steadfast Christian faith of the pastors and congregations, who had stood firm through the dark days of the past and came

On Eagles' Wings A Pastor's Memoir



Colin Barrett

to a new and vibrant understanding of the power and potential of forgiveness and reconciliation.

Colin always intended to write about their experience when they returned home in 2011. This engaging and enjoyable book is an excellent record of a story that deserved to be told.

Meanwhile the Barretts' links with Saxony continue. They returned to Germany this summer to attend the wedding of one of their Sunday School children!

Dave Lowe

Prayer for Libya

A prayer for those affected by the floods in Libya

Lord Jesus, you're familiar with grief, you know what it is to weep with those who are suffering.

You're close to the brokenhearted and comfort those who mourn.

Devastating flooding has led to losses beyond measure for the people of Libya. With so many thousands affected, help us to see beyond the numbers to real communities and families whose lives have been upturned.

We pray that you would strengthen those who are still fighting to survive, and the rescue workers trying to save them.

We pray that you would console those who fear the worst as they wait for news.

We pray that you would be with all who are traumatised and deeply grieving.

Show us, Lord, how to serve you by helping our neighbours in Libya.

When we are daunted by the scale of the disaster, inspire us with your Spirit that we may know how to make a difference.

We thank you for the work of aid agencies on the ground and for all who give what they can to help save lives and support survivors.

You're close to the brokenhearted Lord. Be close to the people of Libya, we pray.

Amen

Taken from www.christianaid.org.uk/resources/appeals/prayer-libya

My Inclusive Church Story – Stella Wiseman



I came across Inclusive Church in an odd, roundabout way. I was working for the Church of England and one of my roles was to put together a newsletter about church events in a particular area. One of the events was an Inclusive Church day in a church in the south of England. I added this to the list, along with the Inclusive Church statement.

Maybe I shouldn't have been surprised when someone complained. The part of the church I worked in was pretty conservative. The complaint was along the lines that Inclusive Church's stance on sexuality did not fit with what the complainant viewed as orthodox. I was told by those in charge to remove the listing. Clearly Inclusive Church was an organisation to be reckoned with!

Obviously I had to find out more. I discovered a church in Southampton celebrating inclusion, in particular LGBT+ inclusion. I signed up to join an event and on the day was struggling with anxiety over my elder son who was feeling heartbroken following a break-up with his boyfriend. "I need sanctuary!" I told the man behind a table, rather dramatically. "You've found it here," he said and placed a garland round my neck. It was true. I felt welcomed, safe and soothed.

Peter – the man behind the table – and I became friends, I joined the LGBT+ Christians in Southampton group which he led, and would often travel there for continued sanctuary and grace. I also found that Surrey needed an Inclusive Church rep and somehow I became it. This is the sort of thing that happens to me! When Peter stepped back from leading the Southampton group I became something of a facilitator, but then came Covid and we haven't managed to reconvene. I regret this.

In the meantime, I have been ordained deacon in the Church of England and will shortly become a priest. I am a part-time curate as well as a church administrator and I am continuing to learn about inclusion and exclusion. Churches, like many organisations, are good at excluding people; sometimes on purpose, sometimes

with no realisation that this is what we are doing. One of my growing areas of interest is that of neurodivergence, and how this affects the church and inclusion. It's an interest that has been stimulated in part because, at the grand age of 58 I received a diagnosis of ADHD. I have masked and criticised myself for years because of it and I am not alone. It's an area I truly hope we can continue to investigate and support each other in.

Inclusive Church stands out because of its determination to embrace those of us who sometimes feel othered or that we don't fit, or can't actually access church as we would like to. Inclusive Church is about bringing the church to the margins not finding ways of accommodating the margins. Thanks be!

*Rev Stella Wiseman is Assistant Curate in the Parish of Badshot Lea and Hale in the Diocese of Guildford, and an Inclusive Church ambassador for Surrey.
Taken from the Inclusive Church Newsletter Summer 2023.*

Inclusive Church News: Affirming Christianity launch

Launching September 2023: a new small group course from the Student Christian Movement & OneBodyOneFaith.

Affirming Christianity is a new series exploring the life of faith in Christ, written by and for people who have shared progressive values.

We're launching our first course in the series, 'How to Be A Good Christian Ally', this September in partnership with OneBodyOneFaith. If you affirm LGBTQ+ folks in principle and want to do more to demonstrate that support, this is the course for you!

Sign up to our mailing list at tinyurl.com/GoodChristianAlly to be one of the first to get access to this exciting new resource.

Taken from the Inclusive Church Newsletter Summer 2023.

Beeston Methodist Church is an Inclusive Church. www.inclusive-church.org



Praying for the Earth



"It becomes ever clearer that climate change is the greatest threat we and future generations face. A true horseman of the apocalypse."

Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury

4. Trinity of Love

Father of Creation,

God of Compassion,

We thank you that you are a holy Trinity of Love

Who rules and reigns with self-giving sacrificial love.

To you, we give all praise, honour and glory.

In this time of climate breakdown,

we ask that we would be filled with your love.

For a love, which in a wounded world, makes a difference.

Trinity of Love, Fill our hearts.

For a love, which in a warming world, looks like something.

Trinity of Love, Fill our hearts.

For a love, which in a culture of denial, speaks truth.

Trinity of Love, Fill our hearts.

For a love, which in a world of oppression and indifference, challenges injustice.

Trinity of Love, Fill Our hearts.

Fill our hearts, O Lord, with love for

Climate refugees

Those caught up in climate-related conflicts

Those suffering from extreme weather events

Those who face drought and food shortages

Father of Creation,

God of justice,

We thank you that you are not indifferent to those who suffer injustice and oppression.

In this time of climate breakdown, we ask that

You would give us a holy rage,

A righteous anger,

Which seeks to stand up,

Speak out and

Oppose the machine of unrestrained capitalism.

Father, in the name of your son,

Let us be those who rebel against Evil which tramples on the vulnerable.

Father, in the name of your son,

Let us be those who rebel against systems that put profit before people.

Father, in the name of your son,

Let us be those who rebel against economic forces that put pleasure before ethics.

Father, Give us courage.

Father, we ask that, like Jesus, our anger would come from a wellspring of Holy love.

We ask that our righteous love and holy anger

Will always be good and never turn itself into violence.

We pray for an increase in peaceful truth-speaking, campaigning and protest.

We pray that it would be made clear to our governments that we will not be silent until we have plans put in place that do not jeopardise our futures and the wellbeing of the world's most vulnerable.

Blessed are the peacemakers.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for justice.

Lord have mercy.

Christ have mercy.

Amen

Rev Jon Swales, April 2021. Taken from <https://atyourservice.arochoa.org/en/26-prayers-for-the-climate-and-ecological-emergency> Creative Commons License

BMC Church Charities 2022-23



**The Leprosy
Mission**
England and Wales

Macular Society
Beating Macular Disease



The total raised by August 31st was £16020.35

eBay	£7991.70	Donations	£737.66
Other items	£2835.98	Recycled books & CDs	£818.81
Coffee mornings	£1607.56	Coffee bar	£1204.31
Money jars	£341.93	Event refreshments	£165.40
Events	£272.00	Wishing Well	£45.00

Recent contributions include £351 from eBay sales, £120 from the August coffee morning, and £106 from recycled books and CDs.

At the service on September 10th, the year's fundraising was acknowledged and representatives from the three charities were able to express their thanks and say how the money is being used.

Nigel Adams, of **HOPE Nottingham**, reminded us of how HOPE had developed after the local churches supported the HOPE 08 national campaign and decided that they would work together by supporting an initiative in the Beeston area. It was fortunate that the United Reformed Church building in Boundary Road was available as a base and it has been good to see all that has developed there. Some of our own church members are volunteers. The money raised is supporting the allotment by providing equipment and all that is needed to maintain the allotment.

Paul Holden is the regional representative for the **Macular Society** and highlighted the research which is ongoing. He also gave examples of the support which is given to people of all ages when macular degeneration is diagnosed.

Guy Willcock from **The Leprosy Mission** had recorded a video message and referred particularly to the Flourish campaign helping tea workers in Bangladesh.

Colin Firbank

BMC Church Charities 2023-24



Lifeboats

The **Canaan Trust**, **Royal National Lifeboats Institution** and **Student Christian Movement** are the charities which we are now supporting. The regular fundraising activities will continue. These include the use of the coffee bar at any time, coffee mornings, sales on eBay, recycling of books, CDs and DVDs, events, filling money jars and donations. Support from everyone is always welcome as are any new ideas for fundraising; I have just discovered Cash4Coins – old British coins, foreign coins etc. – so this may become another possibility.

There is a particular need for more helpers at the coffee mornings at the end of the month. There are usually ten during the year so your help at just one of these will be gratefully appreciated.

Colin Firbank

Wayside pulpits



Nottingham Concert Band

Autumn Concert – 21st October

Part of the musical landscape of the East Midlands since 1991, **Nottingham Concert Band** is an independent community wind band based in West Bridgford, South Nottingham.



The band draws on a diversity of musical styles, from classical transcriptions to contemporary compositions and from film and show compilations to big band favourites, and an extensive repertoire ensures a different programme for each performance.

Since 1993, Nottingham Concert Band has been led by Robert Parker, their Conductor & Music Director. A Graduate and Fellow of Trinity College London, where he studied horn and piano, Robert performs professionally in a wide diversity of contexts. Under Robert's baton, Nottingham Concert Band has established a year-round programme of formal evening concerts, plus a busy Summer season of outdoor engagements, ranging from Summer Proms and community fund-raisers to private functions and Christmas specials.

Set for a return to Beeston Methodist Church after four years, Nottingham Concert Band presents a varied mix of music for your enjoyment. The concert is on **Saturday 21st October** and starts at 7.30 pm.

Café Church Programme

Nottingham Trent Valley Circuit

Open from 3pm
Fellowship starts at 3:30pm



8th October at Beeston Methodist Church	led by Tracey Shaw
22nd October at Kingswood Methodist Church	led by Peter Gray
12th November at Breaston Methodist Church	led by Deacon Sian Street
26th November at Christ Church Methodist Church	Local arrangement

Dates for your Diary

October 2023

- Mon 2nd **Knit and Natter** at BMC 2pm
- Sun 8th **Café Church** at BMC from 3pm
- Sat 14th **Coffee morning** at BMC 10am-12 noon
- Sat 14th **Table Top Time** – family board games at BMC 3-5pm
- Sun 15th **Student welcome meal** at BMC after morning service
- Mon 16th **Knit and Natter** at BMC 2pm
- Sat 21st **Nottingham Concert Band Autumn Concert** at BMC 7.30pm
- Sat 28th **Charity Christmas Card and Gift Sale** at BMC 10-11.30am
- Mon 30th **Knit and Natter** at BMC 2pm

November 2023

- Sat 11th **Coffee morning** at BMC 10am-12 noon
- Sat 11th **Table Top Time** – family board games at BMC 3-5pm
- Mon 13th **Knit and Natter** at BMC 2pm
- Sat 25th **Coffee morning** at BMC 10-11.30am
- Mon 27th **Knit and Natter** at BMC 2pm

Weekly events

- Sunday* **Morning Worship** at BMC 10.30am
 Evening Service 6.30pm (on 1st, 3rd and 5th Sunday of the month)
- Monday* **Little Acorns Parent and Toddler Group** at BMC 9.30-11.15am
- Tuesday* **ABC (Adults, Babies and Coffee)** at BMC 9.30-11am
 Little Acorns Parent and Toddler Group at BMC 9.30-11.15am
 Open Space refreshments and fellowship at BMC 11.15am-12.15pm
 (lunch at 12.15pm every second Tuesday of the month)
- Wednesday* **Wholly Ground Café** at BMC 11am-1pm (including a short act of
 worship at 11.15am on the first Wednesday of the month)
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Beeston Methodist Church

Here for You: God is calling us to

- Offer **spiritual nourishment** and **growth** to all
- **Welcome** and **nurture** everyone
- **Serve** those in our local community
- Be a strong voice for **Justice**.

Beeston Methodist Church is an Eco Church

From meditation to insulation, from location to invocation, loving God and His creation should impact everything in our church lives. **Eco Church** is a scheme to help churches demonstrate that they care for God's earth, to help them 'go green' in all areas of church life.



Beeston Methodist Church gained the Eco Church Bronze Award in March 2021 and is now working towards the Silver Award.

ecochurch.arocha.org.uk



Beeston Methodist Church is an Inclusive Church

We believe in **inclusive church** – a church which **celebrates and affirms every person** and does not discriminate.

We will continue to challenge the church where it continues to discriminate against people on grounds of **disability, economic power, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, learning disability, mental health, neurodiversity, or sexuality**.

We believe in a Church which **welcomes and serves all people** in the name of Jesus Christ; which is scripturally faithful; which seeks to proclaim the Gospel afresh for each generation; and which, in the power of the Holy Spirit, allows all people to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Jesus Christ.

www.inclusive-church.org